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THE TRUTH ABOUT DDT

Recorded by John Baker, Chief of the Radio Service, United States Department of Agriculture, May 2, 1946. Time: 6 minutes, 5 seconds, without announcer's parts.

ANNOUNCER'S OPENING AND CLOSING

OPENING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE):

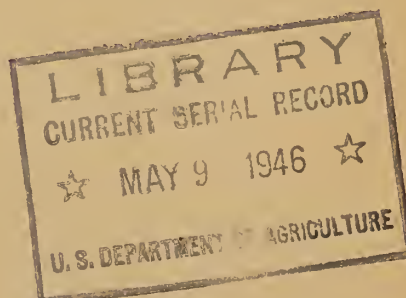
Now let's have the latest word on farm use of that mighty wartime insecticide, DDT . . . as reported by John Baker for the scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. By transcription, John Baker.

CLOSING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE):

And there, Friends, you have the situation on DDT . . . as reported from scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. If you'd like more details, you can get them from your State agricultural experiment station . . . or State College of Agriculture.

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TRANSCRIPTION:

BAKER: This is the first year civilians have been able to really let themselves go, using DDT.

During the war all the DDT went to the armed forces, of course.

Now, in spite of all that's been done with DDT, there's still a great deal we don't know about it.

Naturally, until Department of Agriculture scientists know the full story about DDT, the only official recommendations they're making for its use . . . are those they know beyond doubt are practical and safe.

To clear up confusion and bring us up to date on just what these recommendations are . . . let's have a little roll call, and see exactly what's got the green light for DDT so far. (PROJECTING SLIGHTLY) DDT for household insects . . .

WOMAN: Yes . . . DDT has the green light as a most effective agent to use against almost any insect that annoys us around the house or the barn . . . flies, mosquitoes, roaches . . . bedbugs . . . lice, ticks, ants. In the house . . . where a film of white powder might not look so well on the furnishings, it's best to use an oil solution . . . 5 percent DDT in refined kerosene. Elsewhere, it makes little difference whether the DDT is a dust or a liquid.

BAKER: DDT for farm animals . . .

MAN: If you want to get the fleas off the dog . . . or delouse any of the other farm animals . . . stick to DDT dust, or wettable DDT powder in water. No oil . . . oil solutions are out because the skin of people and animals will absorb oil and take the DDT into the body. And no cats . . . cats lick themselves and DDT may poison them.

BAKER: DDT for home gardens and truck crops . . .

WOMAN: No DDT for home gardens . . . it's still in the experimental stage. More research will have to be done before the Department of Agriculture scientists will make definite recommendations for home-garden use.

MAN: However, DDT may be used to control caterpillars on cabbage grown in commercial truck gardens . . . and also aphids, leafhoppers, and Colorado beetles on commercially grown potatoes. But on the cabbage, don't apply any DDT after it begins to head . . . that's about 30 days before it's ready for market.

BAKER: DDT FOR lygas bugs on sugar beets grown for seed . . .

MAN: Five-percent DDT . . . 30 pounds to the acre. And put it on when the sugar-beet plants are in full bloom.

BAKER: DDT for wheat . . . corn . . . and other cereal crops.

MAN: If the grain is to be used for seed, then you can treat it with 3 percent DDT dust . . . but not if either grain or fodder is intended for food or feed. Some times, it may be all right to spray warehouses, mills, or bins where grain will be stored, but you should have exact directions and follow them to the letter.

BAKER: DDT for fruit sprays . . .

WOMAN: The Department of Agriculture isn't ready yet to say what should be done about the use of DDT against fruit insects. A lot of research work has been done . . . but there's still more to be done this season. We'll have to wait a little longer for the green light on DDT to spray fruit.

BAKER: DDT for cotton . . .

MAN: Use DDT on cotton for the flea hopper and other sucking bugs . . . 5 percent DDT in at least 75 percent sulphur . . . 12 to 15 pounds of dust to the acre. Also against the cotton bollworm. A dust of 5 percent DDT . . . 15 or 20 pounds to the acre. Apply at least twice . . . 5 days apart. DO NOT use DDT for the boll weevil, cotton aphid, or cotton leafworm.

BAKER: DDT for shade and other trees . . .

MAN: Yes . . . against the evergreen bagworm . . . the elm leaf beetle, the gypsy moth . . . the boxwood leaf miner . . . and other tree pests. Use the DDT in an emulsion . . . and apply it with a hand knapsack sprayer . . . or a power sprayer.

BAKER: And that winds up our roll call of the uses of DDT that have the green light from the Department of Agriculture scientists. Are there any questions?

WOMAN: Yes, how about DDT for use against the Jap beetle . . . I've been counting on it to save my flowers . . .

BAKER: It'll take at least one more season of experience to be sure about DDT for Japanese beetles, but it appears very promising for shrubbery and shade trees about the home. There are several other insect pests that also have the yellow light of promise . . . the European corn borer . . . the codling moth . . . the alfalfa insects . . . and so on.

MAN: Nothing for termites . . . not even the yellow light?

BAKER: Not even the yellow light . . . termites fit pretty tight into those little tunnels they make for themselves in wood, and you just can't get at 'em with DDT.

WOMAN: And what about using those little aerosol bombs in the house?

BAKER: All right for insects that are flying . . . mosquitoes, flies, gnats. But for the household insects that travel on all sixes . . . cockroaches, bedbugs, ants . . . aerosols don't work so well . . . better stick to DDT in a dust or oil solution.

Now, one more thing. In making this report on the use of DDT, the Department of Agriculture is not trying to steer people away from the use of DDT . . . it's simply that for crops, the story still remains to be told. Our scientists . . . in the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine . . . are charged with the responsibility of developing safe and sane insecticides. It's a serious responsibility that calls for widespread research in many fields . . . work that takes time. As fast as the work on DDT is completed, the public will get the word.

In the meantime here are three important points we should all know and understand about DDT:

VOICE I: It is believed animals may absorb DDT when it's fed in considerable quantities, so observe all the rules for safe use of DDT until this question is settled.

VOICE II: There has never been a case . . . reported to the Department of Agriculture of poisoning of human beings from DDT in an insect-control operation.

VOICE I: The poisonous effect of DDT on animals is noticeably less than in the case of insecticides like nicotine and arsenic.

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BEULAH, THE DAIRY COW, DISCUSSES THE FEED SHORTAGE

A transcribed interview between John Baker, Chief of the Radio Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Beulah, A Dairy Cow. Recorded May 2, 1946. Time without announcer's parts, 7 minutes, 18 seconds.

ANNOUNCER'S OPENING AND CLOSING

OPENING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE):

Farmers are naturally worrying now over ways to meet the shortage of protein feeds for milk cows . . . but what do you suppose Old Beulah herself is thinking about the situation.

Well . . . John Baker of the U. S. Department of Agriculture thought he'd try to find out. By transcription, let's see what happened.

CLOSING

ANNOUNCER (LIVE):

That was John Baker of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, talking over the feed shortage with Old Beulah, the Dairy Cow. If anybody's interested in those hay-making methods they were discussing, drop in and see the county agricultural agent . . . he's pretty sure to have further details.

